

Development of Sierra Adventure Games

A chat with Al Lowe, creator of the Leisure Suit Larry series

Reddit user: u/niccan4

AGI music

From: A Guy From Mars
Sent: July 21, 2019
To: Al Lowe (al@allowe.com)
Cc:
Subject: AGI music

Hi Al,

I have a question for you: how did you compose music for games (like those based on AGI), and how did you program it on a computer?

Bye

A guy from Mars

From: Al Lowe (al@allowe.com)
Sent: July 22, 2019
To: A Guy From Mars

We found a MIDI recording program that only ran on Macintosh 512KB machines. I bought a MIDI interface, connected it to a Yamaha DX-7 keyboard, played each voice individually as the program recorded it. (Multi-tracking.) Then we ran the MIDI output of the program into a program written by one of the Sierra guys to convert it into object code in a format that the AGI interpreter could read.
<whew>

In other words, “No fun!”

AL

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questions about programming

From: A Guy From Mars
Sent: August 3, 2019
To: Al Lowe (al@allowe.com)
Cc:
Subject: questions about programming

Dear Mr. Lowe,

I write to you because I'm a fan of your games (I played a lot of Leisure Suit Larry 3 and some of Space Quest too...).

I have another questio for you: how did you program AGI and SCI games back in those days?

Best,

A guy from Mars

From: Al Lowe (al@allowe.com)
Sent: August 3, 2019
To: A Guy From Mars

Both languages accepted code written in a normal ASCII text file. That was run through a compiler that created a compact code in a format readable by our interpreter. It allowed us to make changes and immediately see the results, literally within seconds.

I could make a change, type Alt-Z to "shell out" of the text editor into DOS. I'd then type another Alt-Z to run the game. While testing, when I saw something to fix, I'd type Alt-Z to exit the game and return to the editor. I could do the entire rountrip in <5 seconds. And those were *slow* machines!

AL

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Another question

From: A Guy From Mars
Sent: September 25, 2019
To: Al Lowe (al@allowe.com)
Cc:
Subject: Another question

Dear Mr Lowe,
was your programming computer a Pcj (in the AGI era)? How much RAM did you have?
- a guy from Mars

From: Al Lowe (al@allowe.com)
Sent: September 25, 2019
To: A Guy From Mars

A whaping 128KB. Who could ever need more? <grin>

AL

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